WYBC

Personality Building = Producers med-

Production,

2 ETs - Drama

4 Stardust - Pipe smoking,

Tapes - news - interviews,

3 announcing + eng tests

IVY NETWORK----PROGRAM REPORT

May, 1954

This report is divided into three main portions.....An analysis of program policies in the seven stations.....Results of those policies.....Conclusions.

Of the seven stations in the Ivy Network, two did not submit written reports. The others presented in varying degrees of thoroughness reports on programming in their stations. This report was written mostly on the basis of those submissions although I attempted to pad out the information presented with knowledge I have acquired through three years of association with one of the Ivy stations. Naturally, the most extensive coverage is given to my own station, WHRB; and while I have tried to be as objective as possible, I might as well admit that I think WHRB is about the best in the field of college stations. The report for WHRB is primarily based on one given by me at an intercollegiate conference on radio held at Amherst on January 9, 1954.

Sports ann + eng.
Trade taped speakers.
Drama Show

David Levi, Harvard '54
Past Station Manager and
Program Director, WHRB

The following compiled or submitted reports for their stations:

WXPN----Philip Shandler, Program Director
WYBC----Theodore E. Calleton, Ivy Representative
WVBR----Jack Helitzer, Program Director
WDBS----John Van de Kamp, Production Manager

PROGRAM POLICIES

There is no regular interchange of programs within the Ivy Network. The seven stations operate completely independent program schedules with the result that there is little uniformity among them. Certain features are common to all, however, and a study of these stations will show how these stations try to utilize their unique situations.

WHRB-----WHRB is located in the midst of the highly competitive Boston radio area. Four network stations and several independents serve the metropolitan district. Some of these independents are excellent stations employing top flight personnel and using superb production techniques. What then can the college station offer the Harvard listener? It cannot compete with the really good commercial stations on their own territory because it cannot command the talent those stations have. A purely educational policy is not wise because Harvard students feel that they get enough education in their academic work. The station cannot base a schedule on experimental or service programs for it simply could not do enough of them. The problem, briefly, is this: what should be scheduled that will be listened to in preference to the programs of the other Boston stations?

Only one Boston station offers anything more than a modicum of classical music. (This does not take into consideration one all-night program of semi-classical music.) This station is a daytime independent of mediocre standards whose signal is not always clear in Cambridge. Harvard is a fertile field for a classical music station. Classical music is the best kind of background for studying, and most students spend at least part of their day in study. Many students come

to college with a liking for classical music and will listen to the station that provides them with the music they want. Those who come to college with the idea that to be truly educated one has to acquire an appreciation for classical music do the same. Most of those who begin by listening only occasionally while studying usually wind up as ardent listeners. Hence, WHRB, with 80% of its program time devoted to classical music, broadcasts to a "captive" audience. The listeners' only other choices for classical music are record collections or FM stations. WHRB is able to compete with both on a qualitative basis, for it is able to bring a wider variety of music to its listeners than any private collection or FM station which is not on the air as long. Thus, WHRB has found a happy balance between the wants of tis listeners and the deficiencies of its competitors.

Another factor which must be considered is the duty of the station to its members. The members like to acquire more experience than that gained by being "classical music disc jockeys". The answer comes partially in the programming of the other 20% of schedule time. Part of this time is devoted to jazz, mostly because there is little competition and there is a large audience for it, but partially because it provides a wider range of experience for staff members. News and sports occupy part of the time, including a local news show and local sports news. The experience gained in gathering and editing the college news and the final production of the show, which may have two or three tapes portions, is invaluable. In addition there are special feature shows which bring out creative talents. Through the use of the non-classical music time, the staff gains a wider range of experience; but some of the regular classical programs themselves call for production talents of a high order. These are the live or taped performances or the remote broadcasts which find their place on the WHRB schedule.

WHRB spaces all its programs so that it will not lose its basic identity as a "good music station". By the use of block programming, WHRB does not alienate the listener who sets his dial at 550 in the expectation that he will get what he wants. In the afternoon the listener hears three solid hours of classical music, followed by a break for news, sports, and jazz. During the evening he will hear at least two and a half hours of classical music, followed by a half-hour of feature programs (which may also be classical music), thence followed by a ten-minute college news show and more classical music. The news, sports, jazz, and feature shows are placed at times which will not annoy regular listeners. For instance, the big feature shows come at 10:30, not long after the libraries have closed. Most people are back in their rooms and like to take a break from studying at that time. Those who have been listening all evening will usually stay tuned for the college news (a "monopoly") or for the classical music to follow or for both. The other spots for non-classical programs are just before and after dinner when listeners are usually relaxing. In addition, during the past year WHRB has broadcast basketball games and a few lectures, such as Adlai Stevenson's recent series. This, however, cuts into regular program time. The Program Director must be careful not to allow too many of these special events to be broadcast lest the station lose its identity. Done in moderation, these special events attract listeners; done to excess, the regular listening audience will be driven away. People tune in to WHRB to hear the station, very rarely to hear a specific program. To maintain its hold on this large number of steady listeners, WHRB must always keep its identity as a classical music station.

WXPN------WXPN is in the midst of metropolitan Philadelphia. Like WHRB it faces stiff competition. WXPN does not answer the problem in the same way, but the competitive situation does affect its program policy:

> "In our programming we stress the following in the noted order: 1) Music 2) News 3) Sports 4) Produced Shows 5) Other material which has collegiate appeal, but which is offered by other stations either in limited quantities or not at all. More recently we have stressed particularly classical music

and sports, being the only AM station in Philadelphia to carry classical music all afternoon, and often the only station carrying a particular game."

A percentage breakdown of WXPN's schedule finds 49% devoted to popular music, 32% to classical music, and the rest divided among news, sports, and special events.

WXPN also places much stress on its special events department and broadcasts direct or by tape various lectures etc. In addition it has a college news show and college news staff. However, while aiming to please its own select audience, it does not intend to be an educational or public service station. The emphasis of the WXPN program policy is on "entertainment, not culture or service as such".

WYBC-----The Yale station at New Haven does not face the same competitive problems as do the stations in the larger cities. The New Haven stations are not as extensive nor as good as some of the stations in Boston and Philadelphia. Hence, WYBC does not have to worry too much about what its competition is doing.

WYBC, like the Ivy stations in general, gives the college community programs which the community wants.

"The WYBC policy can thus be summarized: WYBC plans to appeal solely to its college audience through a balance of classical and popular music, news, sports, and educational programs. Realizing its potential audience, it serves as a University utility whenever possible."

The balance struck between classical and popular music is a ratio of seven hours popular a day to four hours classical. The regular program schedule is thus given over mostly to music. However, WYBC lays emphasis on special events. It broadcasts every home and, if possible, away football, basketball, hockey, and baseball game plus other occasional athletic events. The station in addition carries important forums, lectures, and other University functions frequently. WYBC also has an excellent college news staff. Hence, it does not try to build upx its identity around its regular program schedule. Instead it depends upon its function as the college station and as a "University utility" to keep its audience.

WVBR-----WVBR at Cornell is in Ithaca, New York, where problems of competition do not exist. WVBR feels that it has two obligations. The primary purpose of its corporate owner, the Cornell Radio Guild, Inc., is to "give the students of Cornell University experience in all phases of radio". The program schedule must thus be kept flexible in order to allow for the free play of creative talent. On the other hand, the station must think of its listeners and sponsors. It has an obligation to broadcast programs which the audience will listen to.

"Hence, program policy of WVBR...is to effect as good a compromise between these two objectives as is humanly possible. Thus, we present a great deal of music, which is just what Cornellians seem to order. Still we use a number of these programs to allow creative genious to manifest itself."

WVBR broadcasts 52% popular music, 27% classical, 2% drama, 9% special music and music performed by local talent, and the rest news and sports, including college news. WVBR evidently does not strive for any particular identification aside from that which it has as a college station. When it experiments, it tries to keep the listener happy too. Creative genius is given an opportunity to try out new ideas but not at good air times. Nor does it devote much time to special events. WVBR uses its proven shows at the favorable listening hours and thus fulfills its obligations.

WDBS-----The Dartmouth station is located in Hanover, N. H., far from areas of dense radio coverage. As the college station, though, it attempts to make its appeal to a college audience.

"As we are a campus organization, we try to fill the wishes of our student ~~body~~ listeners for all of the 16 hours a day--and we try to do our job as best we

can. We take pains in programming so that each person on the campus will find at least one show that appeals to him as a listener."

A percentage breakdown of the WDBS schedule shows that the station programs an overwhelming proportion of popular music, 75%. Another 15% is devoted to classical music. The rest is devoted to news, sports, and special shows, such as faculty discussions and occasional talks by President Dickey. The station always tries to cover sports events also. WDBS thus bases its appeal, it appears, on its individual programs rather than on its program schedule as a whole.

The two other Ivy stations pursue policies which differ to some extent from the rest, of course, but the emphasis is still on music. WBRU at Brown is in the same competitive situation as WYBC, while WPRU at Princeton can be put in the same class as WVBR and WDBS. (WPRU is in a fringe area, however, between New York and Philadelphia.)

Unfortunately, from the material which was at my disposal, it would appear that the stations do not consciously take full advantage of their situations. Few presented very sophisticated views of their program policies. Why stations like WYBC and WDBS apportion classical music to popular music the way they do is not made clear. Most of the stations have not consciously expressed their functions as training grounds, nor have they expressed a realization of the effect of competition on their audience and schedule. Few make any attempt to clarify whether or not block programming or any other type is used. Nevertheless, the results evidently justify the various program policies actually followed.

RESULTS

At the present time there is no accurate way of telling how successful the Ivy stations have been in satisfying their college audiences. Polls are taken on specific programs but seldom on station listenership in general. Nevertheless the indications which these polls, requests for music programs, and general comments made me sure that students who can receive Ivy stations' signals listen more to their undergraduate station than to any other.

WXPN has a potential audience of about 2,000. The station estimates that the most popular programs are sports and music, "particularly classical". The highest figure received on a poll was 75% for a basketball broadcast. At the present time WVBR is heard well by 3,500 students. With new transmitters it will reach 7,500 in the near future. There are no figures provide as to actual listenership. WDBS reaches 2,100 men, with the average audience varying from 250 to 350. The highest result on a poll was 1,100 for a speech by President Dickey. None of the other stations has provided any information.

On March 3, 1954, WHRB took a general listenership poll in the College. WHRB has a potential audience of about 8,000. This poll was taken only in the College, where about half of the audience resides. Slightly less than 10% of the students in College dormitories were questioned in a random poll taken in the dining halls. When asked: "What station do you listen to most?", 178 answered WHRB. The next station mentioned was a local 50,000 watt independent, WHDH, with 75, followed by a 5,000 watt independent, with 28, and the CBS outlet, with 26. Hence, WHRB had two and a third times as many regular listeners as its nearest rival in a poll in which even New York's WQXR was mentioned. Our mail, phone calls, and other impressions lead us to believe that listenership is even higher in the Business and Law schools.

CONCLUSION

There is little to recommend as a result of this brief survey. I do feel that it is impossible for the stations to achieve any sort of regular program exchange

because it would be hard to find a common ground for such exchange among the seven stations. There is already, of course, a certain amount of co-operation in prg-gram services which should be furthered. (The WHRB news staff has received valuable help from some of the other stations on stories involving those other colleges. And the stations have always co-operated on remote play-by-play sports broadcasts.) It would be advisable to establish some means for regular communication of program ideas besides the annual Ivy Convention, perhaps through some kind of a newsletter. If at all possible, the station policy-makers should visit other stations to investigate programs and production techniques. Moreover, the stations should be constantly re-evaluating their program policies. Through such constant re-evaluation and maintenance of standards the Ivy stations will be able to retain their position as the best of the college stations.

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